

# NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I rise to recognize April as National Autism Awareness Month. As many as 1 in 166 children is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders each year, yet the cause and cure remain unknown. Our commitment to finding answers and solving the puzzle of autism must continue.

While the diagnosis of autism is the beginning of a challenging road, it can also be the welcome end to a frustrating process for families. Early detection is an important step towards obtaining appropriate treatment to ensure children are able to grow to reach their full potential. As the prevalence of autism spectrum disorders continues to grow, we must also ensure these treatment options are available in our communities and accessible to those who need them.

I also take this opportunity to recognize the parents, professionals, and advocates who work day after day to be a powerful voice for autistic individuals. They create an important network to share information, experiences and challenges, as well as to celebrate accomplishments. We must all join them in their efforts to pursue increased funding for biomedical research and public health awareness campaigns, education programs that reflect special needs, and expanded diagnosis and treatment options.

I urge all citizens to support the search for the cause, cure and prevention of autism and support those individuals and families who live with this challenging disorder on a daily basis.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### IN MEMORY OF BRENT A. LOVRIEN

• Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, flags across California flew at half-mast recently to honor the life of firefighter Brent A. Lovrien. The city of Los Angeles and the firefighter community lost an exemplary leader when Firefighter Lovrien was killed in the line of duty.

A 10-year veteran of the Los Angeles Fire Department and a member of platoon "A" at Fire Station 95, Firefighter Lovrien is the first Los Angeles City firefighter to die in the line of duty since 2004. I would like to take a few moments to recognize his many important accomplishments and the impact he made as a leader in both his personal and professional life.

Firefighter Lovrien was a leader to his fellow firefighters and a highly respected leader in his community. He has been called an inspiration by his superior officers and has been a mentor to his fellow firefighters. Firefighter Lovrien has also been recognized by residents of Fire Station 95's local community for his efforts to protect and improve their quality of life.

Lovrien was an asset to his community and his presence will truly be missed.

Firefighter Lovrien is survived by his father, mother, and brother—to whom I send my heartfelt condolences. He leaves a lasting legacy of caring and compassion that serves as a model to us all. Firefighters are too often called upon to protect our communities while putting themselves in grave danger. Despite this, they are the first to go into burning buildings, or similar dangerous situations, all to save lives and property. Firefighter Lovrien stepped forward and paid the ultimate price for our protection. We will miss his service and dedication to the city of Los Angeles and the firefighting community.●

## CONGRATULATING TENNESSEE COLLEGE DANCERS

• Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I wish to congratulate the dance teams at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the University of Memphis, who each won their second consecutive Division I-A national title at the Universal Dance Association College Nationals in January.

Each team worked relentlessly over the holiday break in order to defend their 2007 national titles, practicing up to three times a day—and the hard work certainly paid off. The University of Tennessee squad was ranked first in the Jazz division after the semifinal round, while the University of Memphis squad topped the hip-hop division. Both teams continued their flawless performances in the final round, captivating the audience and comfortably securing their spots on top.

The University of Tennessee Spirit Program is the only Division I-A program in the country to place in the top three in the dance, cheerleading and mascot divisions. In addition to their national title, the Tennessee dancers placed fifth in the hip-hop division. The Tennessee mascot, Smokey, also clinched a national title, his first since 2001. The Volunteer Cheer Squad placed second.

The University of Memphis Spirit program had a strong showing as well. The Memphis dancers took home seventh place in the Jazz division while the Tigers' All-Girl squad took home a Division I national title, and the Co-Ed Squad placed fourth in Division I-A.

I would also like to congratulate Tennessee head coach Kelley Eidenmuller and Memphis coaches Carol Lloyd and Frankie Conklin for their outstanding work with these groups of dancers.

It is an honor to represent the great State of Tennessee and these extremely talented and dedicated young people. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to these athletes for their tremendous accomplishments.●

## TRIBUTE TO LOUISIANA WWII VETERANS

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I am proud to honor a group of 92 World

War II veterans from the Acadiana region of Louisiana who are traveling to Washington, DC, this weekend to visit the various memorials and monuments that recognize the sacrifices of our nation's invaluable service members.

Louisiana HonorAir, a group based in Lafayette, LA, is sponsoring this Saturday's trip to the Nation's Capital. The organization is honoring each surviving World War II Louisiana veteran by giving them an opportunity to see the memorials dedicated to their service. On this trip, the veterans will visit the World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Iwo Jima memorials. They will also travel to Arlington National Cemetery to lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns.

This is the sixth flight Louisiana HonorAir has made to Washington, DC, and there will be three additional flights this spring.

World War II was one of America's greatest triumphs, but was also a deadly conflict. More than 60 million people worldwide were killed, including 40 million civilians, and more than 400,000 American servicemen were slain during the long war. The ultimate victory over enemies in the Pacific and in Europe is a testament to the valor of American soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines. The years 1941 to 45 also witnessed an unprecedented mobilization of domestic industry, which supplied our military on two distant fronts.

In Louisiana, there remain today more than 40,000 living WWII veterans, and each one has a heroic tale of achieving the noble victory of freedom over tyranny. Veterans in this HonorAir group began their service in 1940 before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and served as late as 1950 in the European and Pacific theaters as well as stateside. They served in various branches of the military—25 members in the Army, 24 in the Army Air Corps, 37 in the Navy, three in the Navy Air Corps, one in the Navy Reserve, two in the Marines, and one in the Merchant Marines. Several served during World War II and the Korean War, and one of our veterans spent 30 years in active service in the Army, serving through the Vietnam war.

One of our heroes served as a Control Tower Operator with the 104th AACSS Squadron. Another was aboard the USS *Proteus*, alongside the USS *Missouri*, during the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945. And yet another hero went on 35 bombing missions over Europe between 1942 and 1945. Some participated in the Battle of the Bulge and the D-Day Invasion of France at Utah Beach. Many fought in the South Pacific. Some served in the China-Burma-India Theater, and others in Africa.

Also traveling to Washington on Saturday's trip is an active member of the service. Army MAJ Robert Gutierrez of Lafayette finished a tour of duty in Iraq in February. I ask the Senate to recognize him for his commitment to our country.

I also ask the Senate to join me in honoring these 89 men and three